

# KLEFPF

KENTUCKY LAW ENFORCEMENT FOUNDATION PROGRAM FUND

Under the 1998 Peace Officer Professional Standards Act, Kentucky law enforcement officers who meet all hiring and selection standards and successfully complete mandatory basic training, become certified police officers. They also become eligible to receive an additional \$3,100 annually from the Kentucky Law Enforcement Foundation Program Fund, *if* they successfully update that certification with at least 40 hours of additional proficiency training each calendar year. The KLEFPF grant must be earned; it is not automatically given.

Kentucky has assumed the responsibility through proficiency grants to assure all communities in the commonwealth have qualified and uniformly well-trained peace officers, certified by a nationally-accredited training program unique to law enforcement.

The basic salaries are the responsibility of the communities and the government entities employing those officers, explained John W. Bizzack, Commissioner of the Department of Criminal Justice Training.

“Contrary to popular opinion, even among police officers, the \$3,100 is not a salary supplement,” he said. “In essence, the state compensates qualified officers for successfully completing and annually maintaining their professional proficiency through regular training.

“At the same time, KLEFPF funds encourage job-related proficiency while advancing and professionalizing the Kentucky law enforcement community,” Bizzack added.

If, on the other hand, an officer fails to maintain certification by completing annual proficiency training, the \$3,100 is not granted. In fact, Kentucky statutes require that the entire law enforcement department must participate in KLEFPF in order for individual officers to be recipients. If a single officer fails to achieve required proficiency, the entire department’s KLEFPF can be jeopardized and even halted.

The KLEFPF grants have been crucial to standardizing and improving law enforcement across the state. More than 7,300 Kentucky officers currently participate, each annually updating their proficiency training and receiving KLEFPF’s

*“KLEFPF is an example of imminently-sound logic,” said J. Michael Brown, Secretary of Kentucky’s Justice and Public Safety Cabinet. A surcharge on “insurance to protect property-at-risk provides training for Kentucky’s first responders, who protect this property.”*

## Earned. Not Given.

\$3,100. That annual training also allows Kentucky communities to lower liability insurance costs while boosting the safety of their neighborhoods and citizens.

“Law enforcement is an ever-evolving activity,” Bizzack said. “Technology changes, crime changes, laws change, tactics change ... it remains vitally important that every Kentucky law enforcement officer is up to date and keeping pace with all these changes.

“Annual training requirements — based on empirical studies that identify the basic and advanced tasks police at all levels must perform — allow Kentucky to make sure its officers are professionally enforcing the law seamlessly across the state,” Bizzack continued. “Whether officers are on the streets in Paducah or in Ashland, they are all trained the same, the playing field is level and the foundation for equitable, efficient law enforcement is enhanced.”

Unfortunately, many in Kentucky seem to think that KLEFPF funding is tied solely to salary, Bizzack said. He believes the misunderstanding is rooted in KLEFPF’s distribution mechanism and, perhaps, in its history.

After proficiency training has been successfully completed, KLEFPF distributes the \$3,100 to the department of each officer. The department then disperses the money via payroll, Bizzack explained.

“That is where confusion sometimes arises and why many think this \$3,100 is intended as a salary supplement,” he said.

Additionally, when KLEFPF was originally launched in the late 1960s, it was designed to encourage departments to voluntarily participate in training and to further the individual officer’s formal education. In essence, the original KLEFPF stipends did boost officers’ paychecks.

“Once training evolved from merely encouraging participation to legislatively mandating participation in order for an officer to be certified, the entire concept changed,” Bizzack explained. “That history plays into the continued misunderstanding. So with the 1998 advent of POPS — which established entry standards and training requirements for all Kentucky law enforcement officers — stipends were converted to proficiency grants and specific accomplishments were required in order for officers to receive the \$3,100.”

Currently, there are 288 police departments in Kentucky and 120 Sheriff Offices. Of those, only 54 police departments and seven sheriff’s offices have chosen not to participate in KLEFPF.

Additionally, there are 263 officers — primarily in state agencies — who earned certification and have met all the requirements to receive KLEFPF grants, yet they do not because their participation has not been approved by the General Assembly.

“KLEFPF proficiency awards must be earned. Since the advent of POPS, they can no longer be considered an annual entitlement or pay supplement,” Bizzack concluded. ■

### KLEFPF Payments to Individual Kentucky Officers

1972-82: flat 15 percent of pay  
1982: changed to \$2,500 for all

1983: \$2,500	=====
1984: \$2,500	=====
1985: \$2,500	=====
1986: \$2,500	=====
1987: \$2,500	=====
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2010: \$3,100	=====
2011: \$3,100	=====
2012: \$3,100	=====
2013: \$3,100	=====
2014: \$3,100	=====

**A survey of Kentucky law enforcement officers concerning KLEFPF and their opinions about the fund will soon be available online. Watch DISPATCHES for details. A similar survey for chiefs and sheriffs is being directly emailed. Your participation is encouraged.**